

**ST. ALBAN'S PARISH, WASHINGTON. D.C.**  
**VESTRY MINUTES – 18 August 2009**

**Attendees: Clergy and Staff:** Scott Benhase, Jered Weber-Johnson, Ron Hicks, Douglas Dykstra; **Sr. Warden:** Kate Bouve; **Jr. Warden:** Jim Sottile; **Vestry:** Nathalie Bramson, Ruth Cline, Bill Edgar, Andrea Farr, Chuck Holmes, Keith Jones, Danette Gentile Kauffman, Richard Parkins, Eve Zartman-Ball; **Youth Member:** Oliver Eid; **Guest:** Carolyn Seaton; **Secretary:** Jim Tate.

**Opening Prayer by the Rector**

**Announcements and Minutes:** Approval of the July 21 Vestry minutes was postponed pending a correction.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jim Sottile distributed a financial summary of operating activity for January 1<sup>st</sup> – July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009 and provided summary comments (attached). St. Alban's currently has an actual Income to Expense Variance of (\$111,230). Jim Sottile commented that there has been a significantly higher cost on the High Volume Air Conditioner (HVAC) than planned which resulted in unexpected high maintenance costs. St. Alban's has received one recent bequest and is expecting others this fiscal year. By applying 10% (\$54,000) of the recent bequest to the operating fund, St. Alban's should end the year with a balanced budget. Keith Jones moved, and Nathalie Bramson seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. The motion was passed on voice vote.

**Sr. Warden's Report (attached):**

- Copies of a request to complete a Mutual Ministry Review (attached) were distributed to the Vestry to be returned at the September Vestry meeting. This periodic review is recommended by Diocesan guidelines to determine satisfaction with parish life and ministry. The Sr. Warden proposes to report on the results at the October Vestry meeting.
- The next Parish Planning Workshop will be scheduled for Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> (7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.) and Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup> (9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)
- A goal set by the Parish Planning process includes the renovation of Satterlee Hall and the Rectory. A previous architectural review suggested a complete gut renovation at a cost of \$1.6 million. Interested Vestry members were asked to indicate their interest after this meeting.
  - Scott Benhase wants to be prepared to act on this issue when the economy improves.
  - Danette Gentile Kauffman asked the Vestry to consider putting a portion of all undesignated bequests toward a building fund.
  - Scott Benhase recommended that the exploratory committee should consist of Vestry members- especially the Property Committee, and an outside consultant.
  - Danette Gentile Kauffman recalled a lesson learned when St. Alban's began its research and goal setting for the last Capital Campaign at the height of the

financial bubble, then suffered disappointing results when the campaign start was delayed until after the financial bubble burst.

- Keith Jones asked if there was a “lessons learned” report from St. Alban’s last Capital Campaign. Scott Benhase replied “No.” but that he felt there should be a simpler, clearer message, and that promises that can’t be kept shouldn’t be made. Associate to the Rector Tim Boggs agreed to speak with Julie Russell to glean ideas from her experience managing the capital campaign.
- Richard Parkins recommended that the need for the campaign should be clearly understood before announcing it.
- Scott Benhase offered to meet with the Jr. and Sr. Wardens and propose a study committee at the September meeting of the Vestry.

### **Junior Warden’s Report:**

- The handicapped accessible ramp redesign was made available for inspection. Plans are about to be submitted to the DC government for review and approval.
- The Satterlee Hall solar panels are in route and will require a four-day installation time upon arrival. An installation celebration is being planned for early fall.
- The Finance Committee met today and considered future investments for the endowment fund which is estimated to be as much as \$1.8 million by the end of the year.
  - Danette Gentile Kauffman suggested that St. Alban’s should consider whether it is appropriate to seek professional investment advice for these investments. Jim Sottile responded that Clement Dinsmore is a professional investment counselor. He will discuss this with the Finance Committee and will make this a part of the committee report.
  - Richard Parkins asked for consideration of socially responsible investment for these monies. Jim Sottile will discuss this with the Finance Committee. He said there were currently no such guidelines.

**Rector’s Report:** Scott Benhase introduced Carolyn Seaton, Chaplain at American University (AU) and Jered Weber-Johnson who discussed their ministries to people in their 20’s and 30’s. Carolyn reported that AU is at Methodist University, that she holds a monthly Eucharist, and that she works closely with the National Cathedral. Jared announced his program for the 20’s – 30’s group including bringing in speakers on faith and the environment issues, and outreach to non-Episcopal young people. He mentioned that St. Alban’s plans to introduce music to the 5:30 Eucharist.

- Scott Benhase reported that fewer than 40 people come regularly to the 5:30 service. He reported further that he plans to hire a pianist for \$1,500 to provide music for the September – December period as a test of attendees’ acceptance of music at this service.
- Keith Jones asked if the music would be provided by an intern, and asked if there were studies that showed if young people were attracted to traditional services. Scott Benhase replied that currently we have the 8:00 and 11:15 traditional services, the 10:00 combined service, and the informal 5:30 service. Few young people attend any of the traditional or contemporary

services, and the addition of music to the 5:30 service is intended to encourage young people to attend. He fully expects the music to be “intellectually full.”

- Richard Parkins moved, and Chuck Holmes seconded a motion that no more than \$1,500 be allocated to provide music to the 5:30 service for the September through December period. The motion was passed on voice vote.

The Rector then distributed a report on the special, experimental Eucharist held June 18<sup>th</sup> to consider changes in the language and experiences of participants (attached). Forty-one people attended the special Eucharist. The report, submitted by Robin Rudd and Edward Hayes noted the responses of attendees gathered in focus groups following the service.

Scott Benhase announced that there would be a blessing of the animals on October 4<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon in the Columbarium area. The 5:30 Eucharist will be cancelled on that occasion.

Scott Benhase discussed the Spanish language Eucharist to be implemented from October 4 through May 2010. St. Alban's will contribute the wine, vestments, and chalice. He noted that there is no Spanish Eucharist currently held West of Rock Creek in the DC area.

- Danette Gentile Kauffman asked where it was planned to be held and how large a crowd might be expected. Scott Benhase replied that he was considering the Trenbath Assembly, but that if too many came it could be relocated.
- Douglas Dykstra asked if attendees were expected to become members of St. Alban's. Scott Benhase replied “Yes”, and said that he expected the service to pay for itself.
- Richard Parkins expressed the opinion that it was a good idea and that we should make the attendees feel welcome.
- Danette Gentile Kauffman asked if we would be producing a bulletin for this service with St. Alban's logo on it. Scott Benhase said that may come later if it is well received.
- Keith Jones moved, and Richard Parkins seconded a motion that the Vestry endorses the plans to hold a Spanish language Eucharist at St. Alban's. The motion was passed on voice vote

**Old Business:** None.

James Tate, Jr., Secretary